

Willie Blount to Andrew Jackson, November 24, 1813, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

WILLIE BLOUNT TO JACKSON.¹

¹ Endorsed: "Come to hand 31st Decr. 1813. Teste E. Foster, Secy." Jackson had waited anxiously for this letter, expecting it would authorize him to take some kind of action with respect of the request of the volunteers to be discharged on Dec. 10. See his reply to Blount, Jan. 21, 1814, *post*.

Nashville, November 24, 1813

Dear sir , I have just recd. your several letters by Major Searcy all which shall be attended to as fully as in my power. I have forwarded copies to the War Dept. of Grierson's letters to you; and a copy of yours to me of the 20th. Instant, for the information of the President; and for his determination respecting the term of service by the Volunteers; for his order for raising an equal number to supply their place, if he orders their discharge, and for a supply of Blankets etc. The discharge of U. S. Troops, and the order for raising others for that service, solely belongs to him to determine on and to order, my authority does not extend to such cases—my confidence in the Volunteers is so great, and the confidence of their countrymen in them is so great, and the object before them is so great, and the laurels before them so great, for it is to give peace to our country by their valor, that I do not believe that they would wish to be discharged before they reap those laurels—their privations have been great but I hope and believe they are now at an end, for their firmness and valor they have obtained the plaudits of their country, but former successes tho' considerable are not to be compared to those which are to be atchieved by their valor—were I to say that they ought to be discharged on the 10th. Decr., I have no power to

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order their discharge; neither have I any orders to call out an equal number of men, and without such an order to call them out to do so would be to treat men ill because their pay and supplies would be doubtful. I have said to the Secy War that the orders of the Government would be attended to on these subjects. I can only say for myself that was I a volunteer under the act of Congress that I should consider myself bound to serve twelve months if called upon as such to serve, if under present circumstances I as a volunteer was in service I should feel myself in honor bound to await the order of Government for a discharge—this is my individual opinion: as an Executive officer of a state having no instructions from the President, and no right to controul men in the U. S. service I can give no binding opinion on the act of Congress in question; therefore I can only say what my private opinion is, as above expressed. I without further authority than I have to interfere would feel great delicacy in offering an opinion of the law which should affect others. I feel a peculiar pleasure in doing any thing I can to promote the public service at any time, but particularly when our brave Tennesseans are the Actors in that description of service which is calculated to permanently secure the best interest of this fine section of the United States—we look to your Heroes for this important good to be effected. The Creek country and the Floridas added to ours would do it exactly.

Your answer to the Hillabees is very good, but there is a propriety in annexing one or two other conditions to a peace with the Creeks, to wit, that we shall at any time in future be at liberty to navigate their rivers unmolested, to improve the beds of those rivers, build places of deposit for produce, Garrisons etc.; and open roads thro' their country and travel them without passports, just as we do thro' our own settlements. I am told that a Mr. Morgan has gone out to your camp to act as a sutler and if he has not he can get all the articles you suggested on your speaking to him about it. I am with respect and esteem, with the fullest confidence that harmony will prevail in your camp and that every good will be produced by your ex[er]tions, Your friend²

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2 The diffuse and inconclusive tone of this letter is characteristic of all the governor wrote to Jackson in this crisis.